

FMSAC 118-65 S 8 March 1965

Answers to questionf for McCone meeting with Elie Abel

1. What is the best current estimate - based on information since the crisis - about Soviet motivation in putting MRBM's into Cuba? Has the I/C come to any hard conclusions in light of subseq evidence?

A. The deployment of MRBM's and IRBM's to Cuba by the Soviet Union - which was preceded by the emplacement of an island-wide surface-to-air missile defense - was a well-planned attempt to add significantly to the Soviet strategic posture vis-a-vis the U. S. This force would have given the USSR a significant strike capability against which the US would have had no BMEWS warning. It was a major military investment by the USSR with the planning having commenced in late 1961 or early 1962 and the execution stage put into motion in the Spring of 1962. It was obvious that these strategic weapons, which were reliable, modern attack weapons, were to be manned and controlled by the Soviet Union and were not destined for transfer to Cuba.

2. Did the first pictures (Oct 14-15) show any missiles or just scars in the earth and other evidence that site construction might be under way?

A. This question can be answered in 2 parts - MRBM's and IRBM's. MRBM - the photographic missions on 14 and 15 Oct disclosed the presence of at least one Sov regiment consisting of 8 launchers and 16 SS-4 MRBM's deployed in western Cuba at two launch sites. At that time, the equipment that was noted in place was unvetted and continuing improvement of these sites was noted subsequent to 14 Oct. IRBM - construction of the fixed soft-sites for the SS-5 IRBM's were also detected by photographic missions on the 14th and 15th of Oct. No SS-5 missiles were detected in this or any subsequent photography.

3. When was the construction started?

A. Photography in late Aug disclosed no construction activity in the San Cristobal, Guanajay and Sagua La Grande area. However, construction activity was noted in these areas in mid-Oct. It was concluded that the actual construction of the IRBM soft-sites began in late Sept.

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X. [REDACTED] equipment for 25X1
the IRBM sites began arriving in Cuba as early as 8 August.

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4. At the time of the crisis, the operating assumption was that the Russians would not have put missiles in without being prepared to arm them with nuclear warheads. Any evidence they were ever delivered to Cuba (or diverted)?

A. Prior to Cuban missile deployment we had some knowledge 25X1
regarding the composition of Sov Strategic Missile Orgs.

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] It is poss that the nucl warheads were already installed in these nose cones and thus were actually at the Cuban sites.

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/s/ Carl E. Duckett, D/FMSAC